

## **Michigan Brandy Manufacturer Licensing Requirements & General Information**

### **A Brandy Manufacturer license:**

- License issued by the Liquor Control Commission (“Commission”) to manufacturer and sell brandy as defined by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms (“BATF”).
- Required to hold a Wine Maker of Small Wine Maker license issued by the Commission.
- May offer free samples to consumers from the manufacturing premises.
- May sell brandy directly to consumers for off-premises consumption (take-out) from the manufacturing premises at the uniform price set by the Commission.
- May sell brandy to consumers for on-premises consumption at the manufacturing premises in conjunction with a restaurant at the winery premises.
- May sell brandy to the Commission who will resell the brandy to licensed retailers through the Commission’s distribution system.
- Must contract with an Authorized Distribution Agent (“ADA”) to warehouse and deliver brandy to retailers if the Brandy Manufacturer wants to sell their brandy through the Commission’s spirit distribution system.
- Must obtain a “Distilling, Rectifying, Blending and/or Bottling Spirits” Basic Permit from BATF.
- \$100.00 annual license fee.

### **How To Apply For A Brandy Manufacturer License:**

Applicants for a Brandy Manufacturer license must submit the following documents:

- LICENSE APPLICATION - “Application for New License, or Application of Buyers for Transfer of Ownership or Interest in License” (Form LC-687). Additional documents are required for corporate, LLC & partnership applicants, as described on pages 2 & 3.
- INSPECTION FEE - A \$70.00 nonrefundable inspection fee for each license applying for is required to authorize the field investigation. (Check payable to “State of Michigan”.)
- FEDERAL BASIC PERMIT – “Distilling, Rectifying, Blending and/or Bottling Spirits” Basic Permit, issued by the BATF. The Federal Basic Permit does not have to be submitted with the initial application. Issuance of this Permit by BATF will need to be verified prior to the Commission issuing a license. For Basic Permit info contact:

BATF  
550 Main St.  
Room 8002  
Cincinnati, OH 45202  
(800) 398-2282  
[www.atf.treas.gov](http://www.atf.treas.gov)

In addition to the preceding documents required by all applicants, **CORPORATIONS** shall submit the following information per Rule 436.1109:

- Copy of current, filed Articles of Incorporation.
- Current "Certificate of Good Standing" from the state where incorporated, if

incorporated outside of this state.

- “Report of Corporate Officers, Directors & Board of Directors” (Form LC-52).
- “Individual Stockholder/Corporate Stockholder Questionnaire” (Form LC-621), completed by each stockholder holding 10% or more stock interest.
- “Limited Partners, Stockholders & Members Statement” (Form LC-38), completed by each stockholder holding less than 10% stock interest.
- *Note:* All stockholders holding 10% or more corporate stock in applicant corporation will be required to be fingerprinted by local law enforcement agency. Enforcement Investigator will release necessary forms and instruct you to contact local law enforcement agency.

In addition to the LC-687 and other documents required by all applicants, **LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANIES (“LLC”)** shall submit the following information pursuant to Rule 436.1110:

- Copy of Articles of Organization and copies of any amendments to the Articles of Organization.
- Copy of Certificate of Authority to do business in Michigan, if the LLC is a non-Michigan LLC.
- Copy of Operating Agreement entered into by members.
- Copy of most recent annual statement filed with the Michigan Department of Consumer & Industry Services, Corporations and Securities Bureau. Newly organized LLC’s will not have filed any such document yet.
- “Report of Limited Liability Company Members, Managers and Assignees” (Form LC-52A).
- “Individual Stockholder or Corporate Stockholder Questionnaire” Form (LC-621), completed by each member holding 10% or more of the total interest in LLC. Also, Form LC-621 should be completed for an assignee of a membership interest or a manager with a percentage distribution of 10% or more in the LLC.
- “Limited Partners, Stockholders or Members Statement” (Form LC-38), completed by member holding less than 10% of the total interest in the LLC. Also, Form LC-38 should be completed for an assignee of a membership interest or a manager with a percentage distribution of less than 10% in the LLC.
- *Note:* All members holding 10% or more interest in LLC and assignees of membership interest or managers with 10% or more percentage distribution will be required to be fingerprinted by the local law enforcement agency. The Commission Enforcement Investigator will release the necessary forms and instruct you how to contact the appropriate agency.

In addition to the preceding documents required by all applicants, **PARTNERSHIPS** shall submit the following information per R436.1111:

- Partnership Agreement (required for limited partnerships).
- “Application for New Licenses or Application of Buyers for Transfer of Ownership or Interest in License” (Form LC-687) completed by each general partner.
- “Limited Partners, Stockholders or Members Statement” (Form LC-38), completed by each limited partner. In the case where the limited partner is a corporation or a limited liability company, an “Individual Stockholder or Corporate Stockholder Questionnaire” Form (LC-621), should be completed by each of the limited partners.
- *Note:* All general partners will be required to be fingerprinted by local law enforcement agency. Enforcement Investigator will release necessary forms and instruct you to contact local law enforcement agency.

\*\*\* Applicants for a new Brandy Manufacturer license who are simultaneously applying for a Wine Maker or Small Wine Maker license, which is required to be held in conjunction with a Brandy Manufacturer license, need only submit one “Application for New License, or Application of Buyers For Transfer of Ownership or Interest in License” (Form LC-687) and one set of supporting documents. An additional \$70.00 inspection fee is however required for the additional license to authorize the investigation.

\*\*\* Applicants for a new Brandy Manufacturer license who already hold the necessary Wine Maker or Small Wine Maker license need only submit the “Application for New License, or Application of Buyers For Transfer of Ownership or Interest in License” (Form LC-687) and the \$70.00 inspection fee to authorize the investigation.

Send all applications to: Michigan Liquor Control Commission  
Manufacturers & Wholesalers Section  
P.O. Box 30005  
Lansing, MI 48909  
(517) 322-1420  
[www.michigan.gov/cis](http://www.michigan.gov/cis) (Click on “Liquor Control”).

### **Licensing Process:**

An investigation for a new license or transfer of an existing license is initiated by the applicant submitting an “Application for New License, or Application of Buyers For Transfer of Ownership or Interest in License” (Form LC-687), and the appropriate corporate, LLC or partnership documents, along with a \$70.00 inspection fee for each license applying for. Upon receipt of this information, the Commission’s Licensing Division will authorize an investigation and forward the file to the Commission’s Enforcement Division. An investigator from the Commission’s Enforcement Division will contact the applicant; advise them of the documentation necessary to be provided for review; and schedule an appointment with the applicant(s) to conduct the investigation. The investigation will cover a variety of areas including but not limited to: ownership structure; background of individuals; projected cost of the project/transaction; source of finances, including source of any money lender’s finances; present ownership verification; and physical inspection of the facility, if the physical premises is built and available for inspection. Upon completion of the investigation, the investigator will submit a report to the Commission.

The Commission investigator will also release forms and fingerprint cards to the local law enforcement agency and a resolution form to the local governing body. The local law enforcement agency’s investigation is independent of the Commission’s investigation. It is the responsibility of the applicant to follow-up with the local law enforcement agency and the local governing body to ensure that their recommendations are forwarded to the Commission.

The Commission will issue a formal order approving, denying, or holding the application for additional information. The applicant will be advised of the Commission's decision and provided with a copy of the Commission Order. If approved, the applicant will be provided with a check sheet listing any additional requirements or documentation necessary to be submitted to the Commission prior to issuance of the license and a contract for signatures. If the application is denied, the applicant will have the opportunity to appeal the denial.

### **License Fee:**

Brandy Manufacturer annual license fee is \$100.00. License renews annually on May 1. The license fee may not be prorated for part-year licensure. License fee is payable upon MLCC approval of your application.

- MCL 436.1525

### **Michigan Spirit Distribution System:**

Michigan operates as a “control” state for the sale of spirits. That is, the Commission acts as the wholesaler for all spirit products. A Vendor of Spirits sells spirits to the Commission. The Commission then resells the spirits to both on and off-premises retail licensees. Spirit products are warehoused and delivered to retail licensees by Authorized Distribution Agents (“ADA”). An ADA is required to be certified by the Commission and is also required to have a contract with each Vendor of Spirits they represent to deliver their particular spirit products. Spirit products that are sold to consumers for off-premise consumption by licensed Specially Designated Distributors (“SDD”) are sold statewide at uniform prices set by the Commission. The uniform price set by the Commission is determined by the cost of the spirit product to the Commission plus a 65% mark-up, plus a combination of specific taxes. All of the aforementioned components of the system are further described below.

### **Vendor of Spirits:**

A Brandy Manufacturer must also register with the Commission as a "Vendor of Spirits" in order to sell their spirit products to the Michigan Liquor Control Commission. Michigan is a "control" state, which means the Michigan Liquor Control Commission acts as the wholesaler for all spirit products, excluding mixed spirit drinks. The Commission purchases spirits from Vendors of Spirits. The Vendor of Spirits is responsible for registering product lines and filing quotations with the Commission. The Commission then adds the statutory mark-up (currently 65%) and specific taxes (currently totaling 13.85%) and sells the spirits to licensed retailers who in turn may sell to consumers. There is no fee for registering as a Vendor of Spirits. There is also no licensing investigation for registering as a Vendor of Spirits. Additional information on registering as a Vendor of Spirits may be found at the Commission’s Website [www.michigan.gov/cis](http://www.michigan.gov/cis) (Click on “Liquor Control” in left hand column.).

### **Authorized Distribution Agents:**

A Brandy Manufacturer who desires to sell its brandy through the Commission’s spirit distribution system must as a Vendors of Spirits contract with an Authorized Distribution Agent (“ADA”) to warehouse and distribute spirits. The ADA is required to be certified by the Commission to store and deliver spirits. A signed contract with a Certified ADA is required to be filed prior to the Commission approving any product distribution. **If a Brandy Manufacturer only intends to sell their product directly to consumers from their licensed manufacturing premises, they do not need to contract with an ADA.**

An ADA must have a written contract with each Vendor of Spirits they represent. The contract must specify the following:

- The contract must designate each brand of spirits the ADA is authorized to warehouse and deliver.
- The contract must specify the ADA’s authorized geographical delivery area. Statewide distribution must be covered by an individual ADA or by contracting with multiple ADA’s.

- The contract must indicate the responsibilities of both parties.
- The contract must have a specific beginning and ending date.
- The contract must specify the amount per case to be paid to the ADA by the Vendor of Spirits. This warehouse/delivery fee must be a minimum of \$7.48 per case.
- Both the ADA and the Vendor of Spirits must sign the contract.

An ADA is required to make weekly deliveries to any retail licensee making a one case or more minimum order. An ADA may not charge any split case fees nor may they charge any delivery fee except for emergency orders placed by retail licensees in addition to their weekly delivery. In such cases, an ADA may charge a \$20.00 delivery fee. The ADA is responsible for collecting payment from the retail licensee on behalf of the Commission and is responsible for submitting various sales documents to the Commission. An ADA may not have any interest, directly or indirectly in any Vendor of Spirits or in any retail licensee. A Vendor of Spirits must make each of its products available statewide to all retail licensees. While a Vendor of Spirits may utilize more than one ADA to cover the state, all document transmittals required by the Commission must be done by only one ADA.

### **Vendor Representative:**

Vendors of Spirits are required to license an individual as a Vendor Representative to represent them in dealings with the Commission. The Vendor Representative license fee is \$50.00. Current licensing period is May 1, 1993 through April 30, 1996. Enclosed is a Vendor Representative application and instructions. Additional information and application for Vendor Representative licenses may be found at the Commission's Website [www.michigan.gov/cis](http://www.michigan.gov/cis) (Click on "Liquor Control" in left hand column.).

### **Definitions:**

(g) "**Brandy**" means an alcoholic liquor as defined in the federal regulations, 27 C.F.R. 5.22(d)(1980).

- MCL 436.1105(8)

### **Manufacturing & Labeling:**

Brandy shall be manufactured, identified and labeled in accordance with federal spirit regulations published in Code of Federal Regulations ("CFR") Title 27, part 19 and Title 27, part 5. Please check with BATF regarding federal labeling requirements.

- Rule 436.1825, Rule 436.1827

### **Product Registration:**

All spirit products, including brandy, are now registered on-line through the Commission's E-Quote system. Each Vendor of Spirits is provided with a User Name, Password and Database Identifier to access the on-line E-Quote spirit registration system. For more information on Michigan's on-line spirit product registration system, visit the Liquor Control Commission's Website at [www.michigan.gov/cis](http://www.michigan.gov/cis) (Click on "Liquor Control".) or contact the Commission's Financial Management Division at (517) 322-5882.

- Rule 436.1829

### **Hospitality Room – Sampling by Consumers:**

A Brandy Manufacturer may allow persons 21 years of age or older to sample brandy manufactured by them at no charge in a hospitality room located at the manufacturing premises.

- MCL 436.2025

### **Sales to Consumers for On-Premises Consumption:**

A Brandy Manufacturer may sell brandy to manufacturers to consumers for on-premises consumption in a restaurant at the manufacturing premises. If no restaurant is operated at the manufacturing premises, brandy may not be sold to consumers for on-premises consumption but may be sampled free of charge.

- MCL 436.1603(5)

### **Sales to Consumers for Off-Premises Consumption (Take-Out):**

A Brandy Manufacturer may sell brandy to manufacturers to consumers for off-premises consumption (take-out) from its manufacturing premises at the uniform price set by the Commission.

- MCL 436.1105(9), MCL 436.1603(5)

### **Uniform Price:**

A Brandy Manufacturer selling its brandy to consumers for off-premises consumption must sell spirits to consumers at the uniform price set by the Commission. This uniform price is determined as follows: Vendor of Spirits (Brandy Manufacturer or their representative) files price quotations with the Commission. The Commission uses the per-case quoted price as submitted by the Vendor of Spirits to determine the per-bottle price. A 65% mark-up is computed on the per-bottle price. Then a series of specific taxes (4% specific tax for school aid fund, a 4% specific tax for the general fund, a 4% specific tax for convention facilities & tourism and a 1.85% specific tax for liquor purchase revolving fund) are calculated on the per-bottle price after the mark-up has been added. The 1.85% tax is added only on sales to off-premise licensees. In addition, there is a 6% sales tax collected separately by the retail licensee. All retail licensees receive a 17% discount on purchases from the Commission that is calculated before any specific taxes but after the mark-up has been added to the Commission's cost. Retailers selling for on-premises consumption may sell spirits at any price above their cost.

- MCL 436.1603(5), MCL 436.2201, MCL 436.2203, MCL 436.2207

### **Interest In Another License:**

A Brandy Manufacturer is prohibited from holding any direct or indirect interest in any other alcoholic beverage wholesale, retail or supplier license. A Brandy Manufacturer may however hold a Wine Maker or Small Wine Maker license in the same legal entity. Examples of prohibited interests include stock ownership; leasing real estate to/from another licensee; interlocking officers or directors; and financial interest in any manner, such as a moneylender, in another license.

- MCL 436.1603

### **Salesperson License:**

Any person employed by a Brandy Manufacturer to sell, deliver, promote, or otherwise assist in the sale of alcoholic liquor in this state is required to hold a Salesperson license issued by the Commission. Office staff and winery personnel who work exclusively at the winery premises and have no personal contact with retailers or consumers off the winery premises do not need a Salesperson license. Salesperson's must be 18 years of age or older. Salesperson licenses are \$35.00 for three-year licensing period. Licensed salespersons are prohibited from being employed by a retail licensee on a paid or any other basis. Licensed truck drivers or delivery persons are prohibited from consuming alcoholic beverages while on duty.

- Rule 436.1853

### **Aid and Assistance:**

Section 609 of the Code, being MCL 436.1609, and Rule 436.1035 prohibit alcoholic beverage manufacturers, suppliers or wholesalers from aiding or assisting any other licensee by giving them anything of value. Further, a licensee is prohibited from accepting aid and assistance from another industry member. Alcoholic beverage suppliers are prohibited from giving anything of value to their wholesalers or retailers. Likewise, alcoholic beverage wholesalers are prohibited from giving anything of value to their retailers. This principle is the cornerstone of Michigan's trade practices regulatory structure. It is designed to provide a level playing field for all industry members.

Suppliers and wholesalers are prohibited from giving anything of value to retail licensees, including but not limited to: alcoholic beverages, merchandise, furniture, fixtures, equipment, uniforms, cash or loans, labor, etc. While wholesalers and suppliers may provide point-of-sale materials such as posters, banners, table tents, flyers, etc., to retailers promoting their brands and prices, they are prohibited from providing anything that has any secondary use, value or purpose, other than actual advertising value to retailers without prior Commission approval. This same principle prohibits suppliers and wholesalers from providing free advertising, incentive programs, free or discounted product, draft system installation and maintenance, etc. Violations in the aid and assistance statute will result in all participants (retailer, wholesaler and supplier) being cited before the Commission.

- MCL 436.1609, Rule 436.1035

### **Bulk Alcoholic Liquor For Blending:**

A Brandy Manufacturer may purchase bulk alcoholic liquor to be used for blending purposes from a licensed Outstate Seller of Wine. A shipment of bulk wine to a Brandy Manufacturer must be accompanied by a "Release of Alcohol or Alcoholic Beverages for Commercial Use" (LC/MW 836) approved by the Commission.

- Rule 436.1721

### **Record Retention:**

All licensees are required to maintain all sales, purchase and salesperson expense records for a minimum of four (4) years. Records may be maintained electronically or otherwise as long as a hard copy of the record can be created upon demand.

- Rule 436.1007, Rule 436.1641, Rule 436.1865

### **Inspection of Premises and Books & Records:**

A licensee must make the licensed premises available for inspection and search by a Commission Investigator or any law enforcement officer empowered to enforce the Commission's rules and code during regular business hours or when the premises is occupied. The Commission or its duly authorized agent may examine the books, records or papers of a licensee.

- MCL 436.1217, Rule 436.1645

### **Samples:**

A Brandy Manufacturer is allowed to sample their products with on-premises or off-premises retail licensees and the retailer's employees. Sample tastings may not be offered to consumers. All containers used to sample products with retailers must be marked with the word "Sample" in lettering at least ½-inch high. While a Brandy Manufacturer may offer tasting samples to retailers from multiple beverages, only one (1) sample container of 750 ml size or smaller may be left with a retail licensee for sampling by the retailer and their staff. Again, the container must be marked "Sample". A sample container must be removed from the premises within 24 hours and again may not be sampled by consumers.

- Rule 436.1001, Rule 436.1421, Rule 436.1511, Rule 436.1513, Rule 436.1863

## **Purchasing Drinks For Consumers:**

A licensed Salesperson, for promotional purposes, may purchase one (1) wine drink for each customer of an on-premises retail licensee only. The drink shall be purchased from the on-premises licensee and shall be of a brand represented by the salesperson.

- Rule 436.1865

## **Advertising and Promotions:**

Inside advertising signs must be unilluminated and no more than 3,500 square inches in dimension. Advertising that promotes anything other than or in addition to your alcoholic beverage product requires prior commission approval. Point-of-sale advertising may not contain the name of any retail licensee or promote anything other than your products. Advertising on anything having any secondary value, use or purpose other than advertising, requires prior Commission approval. Direct all advertising and promotion requests to Manufacturers & Wholesalers Section.

- Rule 436.1301 – Rule 436.1339

## **How To Contact BATF:**

BATF may be contacted as follows: [www.atf.treas.gov](http://www.atf.treas.gov)

### Federal Basic Permits:

BATF

Technical Services

550 Main St., Rm 6525

Cincinnati, OH 45202

(800) 398-2282

### Federal Label Approvals:

BATF

Alcohol Labeling & Formulation

650 Massachusetts Ave., N.W.

Washington, DC 20226

(866) 927-2533

### Michigan Regional Office:

BATF

1155 Brewery Park Blvd.

Suite 300-A

Detroit, MI 48207-2602

(313) 393-0085

## **How To Contact The Michigan Liquor Control Commission:**

Questions relating to Brandy Manufacturer licenses and other non-retail licenses may be directed to:

**Michigan Liquor Control Commission**

**Manufacturers & Wholesalers Section**

**P.O. Box 30005**

**Lansing, MI 48909**

**(517) 322-1415**

**(517) 322-5046 (fax)**

**Email: [twhite@michigan.gov](mailto:twhite@michigan.gov)**

**Website: [www.michigan.gov/cis](http://www.michigan.gov/cis) (Click on “Liquor Control”).**